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ABSTRACT

Community colleges should be prepared to share an increasing responsibility with local leaders in providing services to their communities. Such an attitude would help to elicit acceptance and support from the people in the district for the college and, in turn, more of the college's resources would be available to help in the solving of community problems. College-community liaison and mobilization of college and community resources would also encourage the sharing of library facilities, college auditorium and classroom space, as well as various community facilities. A community services center could provide information on resources and services that are available in the community and exchanges of college staff and community leaders could be arranged. (RC)

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COMMUNITY SERVICES WORKING PAPERS

NUMBER 5: MOBILIZING COLLEGE AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:
A LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

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February 1970

INTRODUCTION

This series of Working Papers attempts to examine community services in community junior colleges. The Working Papers present current thinking as community services develops and defines its role. The papers focus upon priorities as they are identified by leaders and practitioners in the field. Previous Working Papers have examined philosophy and definitions, financing, experimental programs, and administrative procedures.

In February 1969, the AAJC Community Services Project sponsored a Conference on Community Involvement in cooperation with the Community Services Committee of the California Association of Junior Colleges. This was early recognition that close linkages between college and community are necessary at all stages of program development and operation. We learned a great deal at the San Francisco meeting. Much of the thinking in this Working Paper was generated by the deans, directors, and presidents who participated in this conference and at later conferences in Texas, Illinois, Massachusetts, Maryland, and Georgia.

Community involvement may be interpreted as college in community affairs and community in college affairs. This paper tries to examine ways that the college may offer human and material resources to the community and ways in which the college may involve the community in its planning and programming. This kind of cooperation and interaction is the most critical variable necessary for the development of a truly community responsive institution.

The 1970's may become the "Decade of the People." If our institutions are to become "people's colleges", we must systematically bring the "people" and the "college" into a cooperative relationship with common goals. Toward this end, we introduce the 1970's with a study of community involvement by the community junior college.

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COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

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COMMUNITY NEEDS

"Our communities," notes Edmund J. Gleazer, "are being fragmented by the development of freeways, throughways, urban renewal--all of these things are shattering the old concept of community, and if there is one thing we need in this country now it is to try to establish one society. The Commission on Civil Disorders brought this to our attention very emphatically."[1]

Daily newspapers and television newscasts remind us that the nation's problems are also the concern of our state, region and local communities. We must face polorization of our population by race--confusion over values and goals for individuals and nation--conflict between the desire for personal freedom and the necessity for individual responsibility--continuing withdrawal from our established institutions by increasing segments of the population--dissipation of our resources and pollution of our atmosphere--growing inability to provide adequate housing, to train and employ, and to protect from exploitation a large segment of our population--a breakdown of inner city and metropolitan public transportation--the failure to make our educational institutions relevant and rewarding to a large number of our adolescents--and the lack of opportunity for discussion of issues of importance to community and country.

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[1] Gleazer, Edmund J. Jr., "Our Changing Two-Year Colleges." Planning for Development. Selected Proceedings of the National Conference. Airlie House, Warrenton, Virginia, 13-16 June, 1968. Washington, D.C.: AAJC Program With Developing Institutions, 1968. p. 57.

COLLEGE IN THE COMMUNITY

The two-year college, as the youngest member of the higher education establishment, is less bound by history and tradition and less burdened with the expectations and prerogatives of faculty, students and administration. It is often staffed by people eager for adventure and innovation and it is usually blessed with a supportive community and uncritical students. It is thus ideally suited to tailor its staff and program to meet local community conditions and needs. Educational writers have long held that a junior college becomes a community college only when its multiple goals reflect the needs and directions of its community. John Gardner has named the community college the land grant institution of the 20th Century.

The continued growth of community colleges will, in a very few years, place a college within easy travel distance of nearly every citizen in the United States. This proximity to the people of an educational and cultural reservoir is potentially one of the most exciting educational developments of our time. It places a responsibility and obligation upon the community college to know its community and its people, to make its resources known to the community, and to work with the community in service to its institutions and its people.

This community concern and resulting interaction has been underscored in the writings of the past two decades as perhaps the most unique and distinctive function of the community college. Community Services, in the broad sense, are all of the programs and resources of the institution that serve the needs of the community and its citizens. In a more operational sense, they include the educational, cultural, recreational, and community development services of the college designed to meet the needs of the community above and beyond the traditional day and evening classes. In point of time,

Community Services as a separate and major component of the two-year college goes back to the middle 40's although significant commitment in most colleges has developed only during the last ten years. This does not mean that community services in the broad sense did not exist, but only now is it being systematically planned as a prime thrust of the total institution.

The degree of responsiveness of the college and the presence of people and mechanism to identify, analyze, and attack community problems has a direct relationship to total community support. Today's need is to involve more colleges in an "open double-door" effort that will see total college commitment in the community and significant involvement by the community in the college. Community Services by drawing on its role as college-community liaison and catalyst can provide the impetus needed for the college to focus on institutional redirection.

The community itself is demanding relevance in two-year institutions of higher education through its representatives on local and state boards, advisory committees and councils, and growing enrollments of youth and adults in a variety of specialized programs directly related to local needs. Increasingly, there is direct involvement of individuals and groups in the community to be affected in college program development, operation, and evaluation.

The community involvement and services effort of an institution must be judged in terms of its impact on the community, in terms of how the community, or its citizens are better off or have changed behavior as a result of service programs. Community involvement has long been a stated goal of two-year colleges and will increasingly become an operational fact in the 1970's. It can not be otherwise if community and junior colleges are to fulfill their philosophical and historical commitment of educational services to all people and all communities within the college area.

MOBILIZING RESOURCES

There are as many means of involvement and interaction as there are challenges and responses by concerned individuals on and off campus. However, most college and community resources that can be identified for cooperative study and programming are to be found in five related areas: facilities, materials, services, technical assistance, and direct financial support.

Facilities

Offering college facilities to local groups at little or no cost is usually a first step in sharing expensive and sometimes unique facilities with the community. Although auditoriums, gyms, lecture halls, laboratories, studies, etc., must generally be scheduled at times when regular classes are not in session, a growing number of civic, cultural, business, and special interest groups are seeing their college perhaps for the first time and are leaving with a better appreciation of what their tax investment means to the total community.

In turn, many college career programs are dependent on community sites for their related field experiences and require government, medical, business, and industrial cooperation and supervision. Some on campus laboratories are equipped by cooperating industries and thereby provide in-service employee training as well as college instruction. Class visits to community museums, art galleries, parks, and public and historical places are an integral part of many college curriculums. Free or minimum charge for church, apartment house, shopping center or other public facility will often enable the college to offer neighborhood extension or outreach centers both as a fulfillment of college policy and a convenience to the many who cannot as easily attend classes on campus.

Nevertheless, the college too often limits itself to the campus for its educational experiences and the community is increasingly building additional facilities when both might well look to the other for cooperative scheduling of existing facilities, joint staffing, and ultimate savings to the total community.

Materials

At a time of information explosion and sophisticated information retrieval systems, the community college can share its usually rich library and learning resources with other individuals and groups in the community. In turn, many business, government, and volunteer-service groups in the community are themselves collecting and producing materials that can be college stored, catalogued and made more easily available to all on and off campus. Many colleges through their Community Services Office are establishing themselves as a clearinghouse for materials and information on available services and resources in the community. These community inventories and statistical reports can furnish base-line data for other study groups and action projects. Newspaper files and historical documents and collections are another rich and continuing resource for understanding past and future community problems.

Services

Frequently, the college will provide a variety of special services to the total community that will include campus tours and visits; master calendar of community activities; educational field trips; special cultural activities; community guidance and counseling; coordinated administrative planning; clerical and promotional support for other community groups engaged in service to the general public.

One of the most far-reaching and multiplier services the college can

provide for the community is leadership training for the many volunteer groups that are involved in local educational and community improvement projects. Through recurring leadership workshops the college will have impact on many groups who in turn can affect many more populations than could college programs alone.

Available social, economic, health and other services in the community that can be utilized in an educational learning experience are as often overlooked by the college as they are unused by many in the community for which they are designed to serve. Increased interaction and planned coordination of college-community services can do much to ensure that the combined efforts of government, church, service, and volunteer groups are more effectively employed for the benefit of all in the community.

The support of college-community projects by the mass media and in-house outlets can further extend the effectiveness of a single project and alert the community to the potential of college resource involvement in other areas.

Technical Assistance

College faculty members will frequently meet with community groups through a college speakers bureau, may serve as an occasional consultant to a government or business office, but will less often involve themselves or their classes in problem-solving opportunities in their surrounding community. A prophet need not go unhonored or unheard in his own college service area. Provisions can be made at the college for qualified faculty and staff to offer their expertise to the community. As citizens in the community, college personnel may belong to neighborhood improvement associations, political action organizations, volunteer and service groups. Through these affiliations they can apply their knowledge and training to better understand and work toward solution of pressing community problems.

In a more formal way, the college professor and his class study community problems in cooperation with other concerned groups and bring to bear the combined force of individual, group, and institutional resources. Today's college students are not only prepared to participate in meaningful community study, but insist that the college relate instruction to real people and real problems. They will move ahead on their own if the college is hesitant or superficial.

Many community leaders and citizens identify with and assist their community college by serving as board members or part-time instructors in their areas of occupational or avocational competence; by serving on specialized advisory committees related to the development, promotion, and evaluation of individual career programs or broad college studies and master plans; by serving on educational or community coordinating councils and by maintaining an informal relationship with individuals or departments at the college that share common interests and goals.

Community spokesmen and specialists are available to speak at college career days, college openings, and commencements. They serve as an informal advisor to student, faculty or college study committees focusing on policy, programming, instruction, and evaluation. Decisions to accept new programs or adopt budget requests frequently are made after citizen input as to related community needs in proposed areas of college concern.

Within community services staffing patterns, there is emerging a new paraprofessional occupation of "Community Services Aides." They are trained by the community college and perform as social outreach personnel for the college and other service agencies. Such "aides" may well be indigenous to the population to which the college may wish to relate. They perform an "antenna" function in defining needs and suggesting program directions and services.

With all these potential areas of service, most colleges still do not provide a continuous and planned interchange between faculty, staff, and community leaders, nor are there well-defined mechanisms for joint attacks on common community issues.

Direct Financial Support

Involvement of the college in community problems and programs is most often provided through "in-kind" sharing of personnel, facilities, materials, and services.

Some colleges like Montgomery College in Maryland have established a Community Services Revolving Fund which can be used as seed money to enable a college-community cooperative activity to happen at a time when it is needed and when it can make a difference. State aid, federal funding, community-participant charges and board support from the annual operating budget make up the Fund which can be carried forward into successive fiscal years.

Community colleges are in a favorable position as institutions of higher education to secure outside funding (state, federal, private foundation) for needed community projects. More often, financial support is given to the college by individuals or groups. This assistance is provided through student grants, loans or scholarships, support for study or research projects, or additional funds to increase college budget allotments for community related activities.

While direct financial support can start or move a college-community project, its effect on continued interaction will be diminished unless the financial support is blended with the other resources discussed in this paper.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT THROUGH COOPERATIVE ACTION ARRANGEMENTS

Ultimately, the college must relate to the community and the community to the college. All programs of a community college must in varying degrees serve the needs of the high school graduate and drop-out; young married and unmarried adults; returning servicemen and national volunteers; disadvantaged youth and adults; adults long in the community and newly arrived - with or without additional adjustment problems; established middle-aged adults with grown children and special need groups such as the married woman seeking a second career, the vocationally dead-ended adult, the retired oldster and the varied minority groups to be found in any community.

To plan meaningful programs for individuals, groups, institutions, and agencies, the college can identify needs and resources through sharing existing data collected by government and business groups; can conduct its own studies, surveys, and polls; can meet with organized groups on campus or in the community; can seek out community activists and informal groups in the neighborhood; can organize advisory committees and councils; and might well establish that flexible community-oriented arm of the college, increasingly called a Center for Community Education, Development, and Services. The Center, an expanded Division of Community Services, keeps one foot in the community and one on the campus. It is dedicated to innovation, experimentation and co-sponsored programs. Through the Center, the College is able to respond more quickly to unexpected and urgent requests, most of which allow too little time for normal planning, budgeting and implementation.

Pending the establishment of a Center or the start of any of the above mentioned steps in college-community involvement, each college faculty and staff member can begin where he is as an interested citizen with membership in one or more civic, service, social or professional organizations. This direct help plus related involvement of a college office or classroom can

enable these groups to further their educational and community projects. Expanded assistance can be extended through the Community Services Office to other organizations, agencies, and institutions that are doing related community or adult programs. Co-sponsorship can be as immediate as offering a room on campus and as continuing as joint planning, promotion or financial support.

Less important than the specific vehicle for cooperative action is the public commitment of the college to be of the community and not just in the community, to share resources and to provide administrative leadership that is able to work easily in both college and community.

ROLE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES IN COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Far from being a peripheral, understaffed, and inadequately financed part-time office, department or division of the community college; Community Services is rapidly becoming a coordinating link and listening post for the college and its community. Ever sensitive to changing community needs, aware of existing and possible resources, skilled in both planning and securing support for needed programs, the community services dean or director has a major role to play at his college and in his community during the 1970's. The community services dean of the 1970's should combine an academic background with working experiences in the community. He should have a multitude of interests and a sincere concern for people, all people. He shares a sense of urgency in attacking problems. He must be skilled in relating to groups and identifying, mobilizing, and coordinating college and community resources.

The community services dean will continue to plan, promote, conduct, and evaluate short-term courses; evening, extension or weekend classes; conferences, institutes, workshops; cultural programs; health and recreational

programs; special events and activities, etc., for today and tomorrow. He will also be concerned with coordinated study and planning for next year and the next decade so that the 1970 "college in the community" can provide increased capabilities for community change and development requiring an educational dimension.

If community involvement and community service programs are intended to build support for our colleges, we are on the right track. If our purpose is to analyze and assist in the resolution of community ills, we have hardly begun. BUT BEGIN WE HAVE AND CONTINUE WE WILL.

APPENDIX A

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Involvement of community advisory committees is more often recommended than practiced in two-year colleges. What should be a direct "pipeline" to identifying needs and mobilizing resources in the community may be seen by some at the college as the first break in the dike toward total community domination of "professional decisions." In turn, some of the community may see the advisory committee as just another "window-dressing exercise" of the establishment to rubber-stamp traditional college decisions having little relevance to today's world.

Ultimate success or failure of any advisory committee will depend heavily upon the intent of the college in appointing the committee, the extent to which the committee is truly representative of the affected groups in the community and the willingness of the total college to be guided in its program planning and policy decisions by the committee's recommendations. The facilitating skills and understandings of the college representative, often the community services dean, should provide the sustaining support needed for the committee to continue and function effectively.

Community Advisory Committees can be organized as a broad-based general college committee or may be directed toward a specific problem area or single program within the college. The over-all advisory committee for the college may organize subcommittees to study and report back on special college or community concerns. Since each subcommittee chairman is a member of the large college committee, effective information exchange and coordination is possible.

Advisory Committees may be continuous with provision for overlapping appointments of members. Committees may be organized for a specific period

of time or function; upon the completion of which they are terminated. Committees generally range from 6 to 15 members. They normally meet 2 to 4 times a year. Members are chosen for their knowledge of the total community; relation to a particular group, organization or problem within the community; demonstrated competence in a subject, problem or career area; acknowledged respect by others in the community and an obvious concern and commitment for the general improvement of both college and community.

Committee responsibilities are many but may be grouped in the following broad action areas:

1. Identifying community needs, interests and resources. This may involve surveys, interviews, studies and other collection of basic data and resource materials
2. Developing responsive programs and services; recommending instructors; recruiting students; securing additional space, equipment, and materials as needed
3. Implementing, promoting, and evaluating programs and services
4. Providing direct financial assistance and supporting college budget requests
5. Serving as contact with other community leaders, accrediting or licensing agencies, and state and federal legislators
6. Assisting in the follow-up placement of students
7. Action research to confirm additional program development.

College appreciation for community advisory committee efforts is expressed through the president or board chairman by personal letter, official resolution or certificate, annual dinner, listing of committee members in college publications, involvement of members in other college functions, letters to employers of committee members, public announcements in the mass media, etc.

No more ready opportunity exists for the college to be of the community than to involve willing and knowing citizen advisory committees. Few community service or college staff can talk with and work with all the segments of a community. Therefore it requires more than one set of ears and eyes to obtain a full picture of the community scene.

APPENDIX B

COMMUNITY COORDINATING COUNCIL

Many community institutions, agencies, and groups provide continuing adult education and community services but only the community colleges has accepted as a major responsibility the administrative coordination of the total community effort.

While all two-year college programs and activities should be community oriented, community service programming must begin in the community and continue to relate back to identified community needs and specific target groups. To be effective, therefore, the community services dean must not only be familiar with the community education programs of the total college; he must be acquainted with the myriad of offerings by a growing list of local, state, regional, and national groups present in most communities. A review of community activity listings or public service announcements will quickly confirm the national findings that less than half of all educational programs for adults are provided by "educational institutions" - public schools, area vocational schools, community colleges, four year colleges and universities, graduate schools, etc.

Programming concerns for individual and community development are being increasingly shared by religious groups, business, industry, labor unions, government and community agencies, armed forces, private schools, mass media, professional associations, special cause and interest groups, and cultural, volunteer and service groups. Furthermore, the time-honored "classroom and course" response for any and all educational needs is being challenged by "teaching-learning situations" wherein more responsibility for learning is placed on the individual learner while the instructor or resource leader assumes a more facilitating role in media selection and personalized scheduling.

Instruction and demonstration in the field, individual programmed learning, correspondence or home study, the use of mass media with groups or individuals, discussion and encounter groups are but first steps in relating lifelong learning to lifelong living.

To involve the community in the college, the community services dean should begin by becoming familiar with all the organized and informal sources of educational services. This task need not be overwhelming. It should be considered as a continuing learning and contact opportunity spread over a period of time that will involve meetings with more and more segments of the total community.

Many "non-educational" institutions may not consider themselves involved in "community education and services." Examination of local newspaper files, chamber of commerce listings of community organizations, local government directories of official and volunteer service agencies, and community chest membership lists are all ways of identifying these colleagues in the field.

Many examples of municipal coordinating councils and related-field councils (welfare, health, recreation, youth, etc.) can be found in operation today. Many more councils have been started than have continued over the past quarter century. The heavy requirements of leadership time and support resources and an unwillingness to blend individual institutional goals and facilities into broader community projects have caused some councils to disband. The increasing complexities of local community life as it is now entwined with state, regional, and national concerns and controls have presented problems beyond the existing abilities of other councils.

Nevertheless, the advantages of an educational council or a community coordinating council are well established. With willing leadership, sufficient financial and personnel support and general community acceptance, a Coordinating Council can:

1. Establish and continually update an inventory of community needs and programs being offered by community agencies, institutions and groups.
2. Involve representatives of all groups and interests in broad planning of cooperative and co-sponsored programs, projects, and activities by member organizations.
3. Pool resources in planning major community information and program promotion and feedback campaigns.
4. Effect savings to the total community through avoidance of overlapping or duplicating programs and by sharing available facilities and personnel.
5. Offer expanded and improved in-service training for both professional and volunteer leaders, workers, and aides.
6. Seek outside funding as a total council facing a major community problem or assist individual members in securing more limited project support.
7. Act as a community clearinghouse and information center; conduct surveys, polls and other studies to be shared by all members as well as other groups and agencies in the community.
8. Act as a focal point in relating not only to community-based groups but to state, regional, and national groups influencing the general direction and tempo of the community.

The college, through community services, offers cooperative and co-sponsored programs with many groups, makes facilities available to additional groups and is aware of yet more groups through individual college staff involvement or general community announcements.

An invitation to meet at the college can be the beginning of an informal

council. It should involve non-professional and volunteer leaders as well as professionals. Only then will educators stop talking to other educators long enough to begin interacting and planning with the total community they would hope to serve.

APPENDIX C

COMMUNITY STUDY

A college must know its community if it is to provide comprehensive programs and services that will meet the multiple needs of today's complex and interrelated society. Fewer colleges are going it alone today. Increasingly, they are involving the community through the use of community advisory committees and community coordinating councils. These committees and councils are in turn dependent on expanding the knowledge and experience of individual members by the use of a variety of action research designs and instruments.

Educational leadership will be expected of the college and should involve the combined resources of faculty expertise, student interest and participation, administrative contact and leadership, institutional processing of collected data, sharing of findings with both campus and community and continued support for follow-up decisions and actions.

While community colleges are dedicated to teaching and counseling students as a prime objective; research, study and consultant involvement is increasing through community requests made of the college through the Office of Community Services.

Community study can begin with the collection and examination of existing data as compiled by government, business and other community groups and interests. There is usually no lack of available statistics. The college can often serve the community best by summarizing existing statistics and developing implications and practical recommendations rather than conducting more surveys over well-studied areas.

Further, in cooperation with advisory committees, coordinating councils and other community institutions the college can refine existing data by updating information, identifying data gaps and focusing resources on an urgent problem requiring immediate action.

Community surveys may be broad or narrow in design and scope, may involve mailed questionnaires or group or individual interviews using random sampling techniques. They may be conducted by either professional or volunteer workers. Results are tabulated by paper and pencil checks or by a computer using sophisticated statistical analysis. The basic intent is to support community planning and development by better identification of individual, group and community needs, interests, resources, preferences, and action suggestions.

No two communities are completely alike in their needs and resources. All communities, however, share common characteristics which should be included when planning a study not limited to an immediate or specialized concern. Community features to be considered in a base-line study include:

1. Geographic location in a physical setting
2. Past history, local traditions and values
3. Populations and social groups within the total population
4. Economic base
5. Available transportation, communication, education and recreation services
6. Political persuasions and institutional structure
7. Special problems of intergroup relations, health, welfare, housing, law enforcement, environmental pollution, community planning, special need groups, etc.

Community study for its own sake is esoteric at best. If the survey is to have impact upon the community, it must be undertaken as a joint effort and directed to coordinated community planning and action programs.

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